

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 stand rejected under § 103 on the basis of applicant's admitted prior art (AAPA) and Boutaghou et al. Applicant traverses this rejection with respect to independent claims 1, 13 and 21 because neither reference, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests a protective layer in the location defined by the independent claims.

The examiner acknowledges that the AAPA does not show the claimed protective film, and cites the protective film 68 in Boutaghou. However, Boutaghou's protective layer 68 is merely an appendage at the end of the slider body. It is apparently not formed lower than a surface 73, where the transducer element 64 is provided. The absence of this claim element in either reference is strong evidence of nonobviousness.

Moreover, there is no motivation or suggestion to locate the claimed protection film where applicant has located it. Neither reference addressed the problem solved by applicant, i.e., protecting the head against reverse rotation of the disk. The layer 68 in Boutaghou would not be in contact with the disk in that condition, due to the wear member 76 and lower surface 73. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of the independent claims and their related dependent claims is respectfully requested.

For the foregoing reasons, applicants believe that this case is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The examiner should call applicants' attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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November 6, 2003

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